

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: THURSDAY, 20 AUGUST 2015  
title: DELEGATION TO DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING GROUP  
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
principal author: COLIN HIRST

## 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To agree areas of delegation to the Council's Development Plan working group.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – The Development Plan is fundamental to the delivery of planning policy and will help in protecting and enhancing environmental quality. Planning policies will help deliver the Council's ambitions relating to the supply of affordable homes in the area, and economic growth.
- Corporate Priorities – The working group in supporting the delivery of key planning policy will help deliver community involvement. The area of responsibility contributes to the objectives of a sustainable economy, thriving market towns and housing.
- Other Considerations – The Council has a duty to prepare and keep up to date a Local Development Scheme for the area.

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Having adopted the Core Strategy, the Council now needs to address the delivery of the previously identified Housing and Economic Development Plan Document (DPD) bringing forward proposals for specific land allocations needed to implement the adopted Core Strategy. The next stage will also facilitate the update of the proposals map reflecting the provisions of the Core Strategy and providing policy designations for development management purposes.

2.2 A Member working group has been established to provide an overview to the process and has already held formative meetings to input to the process. Making progress on the 'allocations' plan has been recognised as a priority and the working group has sought to identify opportunities by which to streamline process and enable the plan to progress as quickly as possible.

## 3 DELEGATION

3.1 At its first meeting the time-frame set out in the Local Development Scheme was reviewed by the working group. As Members will recall the plan making process is regulated by statutory stages that the Council has to follow and inevitably these have set timeframes and lead in times. The Council's own decision making process is governed by the committee cycle and its administration timetable. The working group is able to work less rigidly and can respond to issues more readily as they arise, providing Member input to operational decisions both proactively and re-actively.

- 3.2 To help speed up the process where appropriate and avoid delays to areas of work that otherwise would need to be brought before a full committee under current arrangements; the working group is proposing that some matters be delegated to them to progress.
- 3.3 Within the plan making process there are clearly matters where it is necessary for agreement to be sought through full committee such as agreeing and adopting policy matters including allocations, policy designations that the council may wish to propose and such like. Indeed within the statutory regulations certain documents such as the proposed submission plan or statutory adoption have to be considered by full committee and approved by The Council. Equally, if as work progresses it is appropriate to adopt any policy for decision making purposes this would need to be considered by the Planning and Development Committee.
- 3.4 As Members are aware plan preparation operates on a frontloading basis whereby the production of the plan is based on evidence, consultation, and engagement with stakeholders where ideas and options are explored in formulating proposals for the plan. There are many stages in the process where it is held that the working group could, where necessary, consider and endorse stages for consultation, the publication of evidence base material testing of options and sustainability appraisal.
- 3.5 As previously reported a budget has been established based on estimates of work required including commissioning of consultancy support. The working group has a role in keeping under review the project budget. Given that it will have detailed knowledge of issues that emerge it is also well placed to respond to any requirement to commission additional support or particular pieces of work where gaps in our evidence become apparent within the budget established.
- 3.6 Agreeing to delegate decisions in relation to the matters identified above, would mean as work develops it can be taken forward proactively and committee time is utilised to consider the outcome and resulting policy. This will serve to progress the plan more effectively and help deliver the plan as quickly as possible.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:
- Resources – There are no direct implications on resources as a result of this report. In the event of additional budget requirements being identified, this would be subject to separate reports to Committee.
  - Technical, Environmental and Legal – Up to date, timely and relevant planning policies are important in maintaining and improving the environment of the borough. It is important to complete the local plan for the borough to have in place the DPD as soon as practicable.
  - Political – There are no direct political implications.
  - Reputation – Appropriate delegation demonstrates the council operates as efficiently as possible.
  - Equality & Diversity – No issues identified.

**5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of Planning and Development Committee and the Development Plan Working Group to take such steps as are appropriate and necessary to progress the Housing and Economic DPD in relation to matters of consultation, stakeholder engagement, evidence base and options testing.

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MARSHAL SCOTT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1 Local Development Scheme

For further information please ask for Colin Hirst, extension 4503.

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